



# WISCONSIN WELLHEAD PROTECTION NEWS

Spring, 2000

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## HAPPY SPRING!

Now that we've put away the shovels (or at least thought about putting them away), it's time to celebrate spring and Drinking Water Week.

Drinking Water Week will be May 7-13, 2000, with the theme of "Water Works Wonders!" Some ideas are included to help you and your community celebrate Drinking Water Week.

In addition to the wellhead protection (WHP) resources listed in the fall newsletter, I am listing several others resources that can help you and your community protect its water supply. This issue also contains information on arsenic in groundwater plus updates on the Source Water Assessment Program and the Groundwater Rule, including an announcement of a meeting in Sturgeon Bay on the Groundwater Rule.

If you'd like additional information on the resources listed in this newsletter or have questions regarding wellhead protection, please contact me by phone (877-268-9355 toll free), by fax (608-267-7650), by email ([lindod@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:lindod@dnr.state.wi.us)) or regular mail (Wisconsin DNR, P. O. Box 7921, Madison, WI 53707-7921).

I hope you find this issue informative. Have a wonderful Spring and Summer!  
Dave Lindorff, Editor

## CELEBRATE DRINKING WATER WEEK – MAY 7-13!!

Once a year we take time to celebrate the abundant drinking water resources available to us. Because water is so important to the economy and vitality of Wisconsin, it is important that we make every effort to protect that resource. Everyone has a role to play in safeguarding our valuable water supplies. Here are some simple and practical ways to conserve and protect Wisconsin's water resources.

- ❑ Turn off the tap when washing dishes, brushing teeth or shaving
- ❑ Run the dishwasher and washing machine only when full
- ❑ Choose natural household cleaners like borax, ammonia, vinegar, and baking soda. They are less expensive than their more toxic counterparts and work just as well.
- ❑ Never pour toxic chemicals down the drain, on the ground, or in the trash. Reuse or recycle them. If a recycling center doesn't exist in your area, encourage the city or county to host a clean sweep program.
- ❑ Take used motor oil and other automotive fluids to a service center that recycles them. Patronize automotive centers and stores that accept car batteries for recycling.
- ❑ Reduce your use of lawn and garden pesticides and fertilizers and look for safer alternatives to control weeds and bugs. For example, geraniums repel Japanese beetles; garlic and mint repel aphids; and marigolds repel whiteflies. Dig out dandelions rather than using pesticides. Only buy as much fertilizer and pesticide as you will use in one year.

## BLUE THUMB

During Drinking Water Week, there will be a number of local programs across Wisconsin and the nation to educate the public about the importance of our drinking water supplies. There will be

educational events in libraries, schools, water treatment plants and shopping malls. Groups often schedule river cleanups, hazardous waste collections and other water pollution prevention activities to raise public awareness.

If you're interested in celebrating this week, the Blue Thumb Project can help provide you with ideas and activities. The Blue Thumb Project is an ongoing campaign to raise public awareness and understanding of drinking water issues and to motivate individuals, organizations, communities and local governments to make water-responsible choices. Project activities can be used year-round, but they're especially useful during Drinking Water Week. There are a number of kits and materials available. Contact: Blue Thumb Project, c/o American Water Works Association, 6666 West Quincy Avenue, Denver, Colorado 80235, 303-794-7711. You can also visit their Web site at: <http://www.awwa.org/bluethum.htm>

### **GROUNDWATER MODEL PROJECT**

One of the educational tools available is the groundwater flow model. The flow model is made of clear plastic and is filled with sand and other materials to simulate aquifers. It is used as an educational tool to demonstrate how water and contaminants move through aquifers, various soil structures and watersheds.

Groundwater models can be ordered from the UW-Stevens Point Student Chapter of the American Water Resources Association. The groundwater model is made by the students at UW-Stevens Point as a fund raiser.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuorg/awra/h2omodel.html>

The model cost is \$350 plus \$10 shipping (allow 4-6 months). Models can be ordered in 2-4 weeks for an additional \$20. Order forms are available at: AWRG Groundwater Model Project, College of Natural Resources, Room 252A, University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point, Stevens Point, WI 54481, (715) 346-4613, e-mail at: [gwmproj@uwsp.edu](mailto:gwmproj@uwsp.edu), or download the form from: <http://www.uwsp.edu/stuorg/awra/orderfrm.txt>

You can borrow a model from a number of DNR offices. For the location nearest you, contact Janet Hutchens of the Wisconsin DNRs Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater at 608-261-8453.

Models can also be borrowed from the following sources.

Laura Felda  
Adopt-A-Lake Coordinator  
Wisconsin Lakes Partnership  
UW-Stevens Point  
Stevens Point, WI 54481  
715-346-3366



Wisconsin Groundwater Association  
Southeast Wisconsin at 414-291-8840  
Eau Claire at 715-834-3161

Central WI Environmental Station and other Water Education Resource Centers  
(715) 824-2428  
<http://www.uwsp.edu/acad/cnr/affil/cwes/index.htm>

UW Extension Offices, check your phone book for local offices.

### **AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION**

As promised in the last newsletter, the Department has completed the wellhead protection video, *An Ounce of Prevention*. The 16-minute video focuses on the steps needed to protect community wells, the benefits of preventing contamination and the resources available to help communities get started. It shows how three Wisconsin communities successfully used wellhead protection planning to safeguard their valuable water supplies.

Over 500 copies of the video were sent out in late January to municipal water utility owners and mayors across Wisconsin encouraging them to be proactive in protecting their valuable water supply. If you didn't get a copy of the video, but would like one, contact Dave Lindorff.

Through a followup letter sent two weeks after the video, the Department offered a checklist of publications and help in getting started with wellhead protection. Three Department staff are available to help communities get started. Dave Lindorff works with communities in southeast Wisconsin. Dave Johnson (608-261-6421 or [johnsdm@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:johnsdm@dnr.state.wi.us)) works with southwest and northeast Wisconsin communities. Randell Clark (608-267-7895 or [clarkr@dnr.state.wi.us](mailto:clarkr@dnr.state.wi.us)) works with communities in west, central and northern Wisconsin. If you are interested in assistance from the Department, you can contact Dave, Dave or Randell, depending on where you live. All three have the same fax number and mail address.

## NEW PUBLICATION

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has just recently completed an update to a 1984 publication. The hot-off-the-press document is titled, "*A Template for Preparing Wellhead Protection Plans for Municipal Wells*". This publication describes how to complete each of the nine steps for a wellhead protection plan for a new well as outlined in administrative code NR 811.16. Although this template is intended for use by those municipalities which are required to prepare a WHP plan, communities with existing wells are strongly encouraged to use this document when preparing a WHP plan for their existing wells. Contact Dave Lindorff to get a copy.

## WEB SITE

Over the past several months, the DNR has continued to expand the WHP web site ([www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/gw/whp.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/gw/whp.htm)) The website includes: a description of wellhead protection, a summary of Wisconsin's program, an annotated list of publications, a list of contacts, example ordinances, past issues of the Wisconsin WHP Newsletter, and a list of available publications. Check it out, especially if you haven't visited it before.

## SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

Through the source water assessment program (SWAP), the DNR has supported or is supporting groundwater flow modeling efforts in all or parts of the following Wisconsin counties: Adams, Brown, Dane, Eau Claire, Kenosha, LaCrosse, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Rock, Sauk, Walworth, Washington, Waukesha, Outagamie, Pierce, Portage, St. Croix, Waushara, Winnebago and Wood. In addition to providing a valuable groundwater planning tool for communities in these counties, these projects will provide advanced delineations that can be used for wellhead protection for the municipal wells within these areas.

Also of interest is a project that is scanning all of the state's approximately 350,000 archived well construction reports. The scanned images will be searchable by location and will be used to identify public well construction reports where no such information is currently available in the case files. This project has just begun and is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year.

More information on Wisconsin's SWAP is available on the internet at:  
[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/gw/swp.htm](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/dwg/gw/swp.htm)

## GROUNDWATER RULE UPDATE

As described in the last issue of this newsletter, EPA is proposing a rule that will specify the appropriate use of disinfection in groundwater and address other components of groundwater systems to assure public health protection. The Groundwater Rule (GWR) will establish multiple barriers to protect against bacteria and viruses in drinking water from groundwater sources and will establish a targeted strategy to identify groundwater systems at high risk for fecal contamination. The GWR is scheduled to be proposed in April and finalized in November of 2000.

If you're interested in learning more about the GWR, the League of Women Voters of Door County is sponsoring a 4 hour meeting on the GWR and the particular challenges Door County will face in implementing the rule on Friday, April 28, 2000 at the Stone Harbor Inn in Sturgeon Bay beginning at 10:00 am. The number at the Stone Harbor is (920) 746-0700. Speakers scheduled for this meeting include Maureen Muldoon, Hydrogeology Professor, UW-Oshkosh, David Battigelli, Virologist, WI State Lab of Hygiene, Joe Janczy from EPA, and Bob Schaefer, Water System Engineer with the WDNR.

## ARSENIC IN GROUNDWATER

One of the emerging issues that Department staff are working on is naturally occurring arsenic in groundwater. There have been detections of arsenic from wells in every county of the state. In addition, there is a higher number of arsenic detections in northeast Wisconsin.

Arsenic is also of concern because EPA is required by the 1996 revisions to the Safe Drinking Water Act to propose a revision to the current Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) for Public Water supplies of 50 micrograms/liter (ug/L). EPA will likely propose a standard in the summer of 2000. They have indicated that the proposed standard may be 5 ug/L. EPA will request public comment on 3, 5, and 10 ug/L levels. If EPA releases a proposal in mid-2000, at a minimum, the state would have 3 years to implement the new standard.

Due to recent arsenic findings, the effects of a potential federal drinking water standard change, unresolved drilling method and construction specification issues, DNR has established a statewide work group of professionals who have

expertise in various fields that relate to naturally occurring arsenic in groundwater. The group includes DNR Drinking Water & Groundwater staff, other state agencies, EPA, the US and Wisconsin Geological Surveys, UW System, UW Extensions, Local County Health Departments, the National Institute of Health, and the Wisconsin Water Well Association. Sub-groups are focusing efforts on: regional characterization of arsenic, hydrogeological and geochemical triggers, health issues, recommendations, and communication and education.

A public information brochure on arsenic has been created by the DNR in cooperation with the State Department of Health & Family Services and has been approved by the Groundwater Coordinating Council's Education Subcommittee. It will be ready for distribution to the public through DNR's regional offices by late April.

**Bureau of Drinking Water and Groundwater  
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